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RNR128

MIDEAST-OBSERVERS:

UNITED NATIONS, OCT. 26, REUTER--OFFICIALS HERE WERE AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN A WHITE HOUSE STATEMENT TODAY THAT THE U.S. WAS PREPARED TO SEND OBSERVERS TO THE MIDDLE EAST, SINCE IT ALREADY HAS SOME THERE.

EIGHT AMERICAN OFFICERS PRESENTLY ARE ON DUTY WITH THE U.N. TRUCE SUPERVISION ORGANIZATION (UNTSO), INCLUDING ITS CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER, LT. COL. NICHOLAS S. H. KRAWCIW.

THE ONLY OTHER NUCLEAR POWER REPRESENTED IN UNTSO IS FRANCE, WHICH HAS 24 OFFICERS SERVING IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ONE FRENCH OFFICER HAS BEEN MISSING SINCE HIS OBSERVATION POST WAS CAUGHT IN THE FIGHTING THAT BROKE OUT ON OCTOBER 6.

UNTSO, WHICH HAS BEEN ON DUTY IN THE MIDDLE EAST SINCE 1949 TO OBSERVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARMISTICE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN THE ARAB STATES AND ISRAEL, IS BEING BEEFED UP UNDER THE NEW SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.
MORE ML/LFT/BC1434

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MIDEAST-OBSERVERS 2 U.N.:

ITS CHIEF OF STAFF IS MAJ. GEN. ENSIO SIILASVUO, NOW APPOINTED ALSO TO BE THE INTERIM COMMANDER OF THE NEW U.N. EMERGENCY FORCE.

UNTSO OFFICERS CARRY NO WEAPONS AND OPERATE GENERALLY WITHIN A LIMITED FIELD AROUND A FIXED POST, WHICH INCLUDES AN ELEVATED PLATFORM FROM WHICH THE OBSERVERS MAY WATCH FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE TRUCE.

TROOPS OF THE NEW UNEF WILL CARRY SIDE ARMS AND PATROL GREATER DISTANCES ALONG THE LINES BETWEEN THE OPPOSING ARMIES. THE OPERATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO FUNCTION IN TANDEM.

U.N. SOURCES SAID THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE INTENTION OF INVITING SOVIET AND BRITISH OBSERVERS TO JOIN UNTSO, ALTHOUGH THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION BARRED THE NUCLEAR POWERS ONLY FROM SERVICE WITH UNEF.

REUTER ML/LFT/BC1437